

I am an Amateur Radio Operator. The new data communications technology known as Broadband over Power Line (BPL), a form of Power Line Carrier (PLC) data transfer technology, is a system which, when widely implemented, has the potential to render the spectrum between 2 and 80 MHz virtually useless to excessive line noise. The inductive coupling of RF energy modulated with high-speed digital data would radiate quite effectively from overhead power lines, causing harmful interference to the HF bands used in the Amateur Radio Service. This would have the effect of essentially eliminating most use of the HF bands in the ARS, and thus, cause the loss of an emergency backup communications service of proven value to our country.

Recently, the American Radio Relay League made tests of received BPL interference in several areas of the country where BPL is being tested by power utilities. In these tests, there was shown to be extremely harmful interference caused by high noise levels on the Amateur Radio Service HF bands. This interference would have made reception of all but the strongest signals impossible. Since Amateur Radio is a communications service which quite often does not permit the average licensee to build a station capable of operating at maximum power levels, and with maximum antenna gain, the need for spectrum which is relatively free of background noise is extremely important in order to conduct routine communications at typical low power levels. BPL would make this impossible. The Amateur Radio Service is not the only communications service which would be affected by interference from BPL systems. High Frequency radio is also used in aviation, maritime, military, and commercial telecommunications services. These services would also be affected by the harmful interference caused by BPL systems.

There are other cost-effective alternatives to delivering broadband data communications which can be developed and implemented but which will not result in the harmful interference caused by BPL. I urge the Commission not to permit the implementation of BPL technology.

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